

Not once, in nearly 20 years of production, has there ever been a report of e.coli or other food-borne illness resulting from finely textured lean beef. It is safe, healthy and only being vilified because someone thought it might win them an award.

It is my hope that the American people will not be so easily fooled in the future, and will explore the facts for themselves, rather than allowing a news organization, on a crusade to win awards, take down a safe, successful company providing good jobs for hundreds of Americans.

HONORING MS. JENNIFER VALOPPI

### HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 29, 2012*

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Women's History Month, I rise today to honor Ms. Jennifer Valoppi, an outstanding individual and leader in South Florida.

Ms. Valoppi is a multi-Emmy Award winning TV journalist, award winning author and social entrepreneur. Ms. Valoppi is the President and Co-Founder of the Women of Tomorrow Mentor and Scholarship Program (WOT), a unique mentoring organization that helps young at-risk women live up to their full potential. She is currently engaged in expanding WOT nationally to inspire and motivate women across the nation. Through Ms. Valoppi's leadership, WOT has received national recognition and has been the focus of study by the Harvard Business School Community Partners Program.

As lead anchor at NBC 6 WTVJ in Miami, Ms. Valoppi covered historic moments including the 2000 Presidential election, the Elian Gonzalez saga, the Versace Murder, the Olympics, and California's Northridge earthquake. She also took a leading role in driving the stations commitment to fair, accurate, and balanced journalism.

Both Ms. Valoppi and her husband, Christian Berdouare have made tremendous contributions to our community and are highly admired for their hard work. Ms. Valoppi is a recipient of Florida Jeb Bush's Points of Light Award, the highest honor in Florida. She was named a Heavy Hitter in Non-Profit by the South Florida Business Journal. She has also been awarded the "Inner Circle of 12 Distinction" from the American Cancer Society and the "Woman of Impact Award" from the Women's History Coalition, among many other awards and recognitions.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Ms. Jennifer Valoppi for her continued service to the South Florida community and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a dear friend and an exemplary individual.

TRIBUTE TO PATRICK  
PALMERSHEIM

### HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 29, 2012*

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Patrick

Palmersheim for being awarded the Medal of Honor from the Iowa State Daughters of the American Revolution.

Daughters of the American Revolution was founded in 1890 and incorporated by Congress in 1896 as a national volunteer organization committed to encouraging patriotism and promoting American ideals through better education for our nation's children. Nationwide, DAR boasts more than 170,000 members from 3,000 chapters across all 50 states in addition to various international chapters as well.

The most prestigious honor awarded by Daughters of the American Revolution is the DAR Medal of Honor. To receive this prestigious award, one must be a native born American who has shown an extraordinary commitment to the qualities of service, leadership, trustworthiness and, of course, patriotism. DAR Medal of Honor recipients are recognized for making lasting contributions to our American heritage through selfless service to their country, state, community and fellow man.

Accordingly, Mr. Palmersheim has been serving Iowans his entire career. Patrick served nine years in our nation's Air Force before civically serving in his rural Iowa community through his roles on the city council, as a volunteer firefighter, and as mayor. In 2002, he was appointed Executive Director of the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs by then Governor Tom Vilsack. Patrick's leadership in his new role directly led to Iowa becoming the first state in the U.S. to pass legislation that allowed nursing homes the opportunity to report their residents for potential eligibility for federal benefits from the Veterans Administration. Mr. Palmersheim was also instrumental in establishing the long-desired Iowa Veterans Cemetery, which has provided a final resting place for 80,000 veterans since its groundbreaking in November of 2006.

Mr. Speaker, what Mr. Palmersheim has done for the state of Iowa and our veterans cannot be understated. He is truly the benchmark for which this prestigious award is bestowed. It is an honor to represent Patrick and all of Iowa's veterans in the United States Congress and I trust my colleagues in the House will rise to join me in congratulating Patrick for all he has done.

HONORING DONALD JONES, JASON  
BOWMASTER, AND DANIEL  
DIMATTEO

### HON. TIM GRIFFIN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 29, 2012*

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor three Arkansas heroes.

Jacksonville Fire Department Captain Donald Jones and Engineer Jason Bowmaster along with Jacksonville Police Officer Daniel DiMatteo were struck by a van while responding to an accident on Monday, March 19th.

Engineer Bowmaster and Officer DiMatteo are in stable condition.

However, tragically, Captain Jones, a 31-year veteran of the department, passed away as a result of his injuries. He is the first member of the Jacksonville Fire Department to be killed in the line of duty.

Captain Jones served the last years of his career with Station 4 and is survived by his wife, Betty, his five children, three brothers, nine grandchildren, and one great-grandson.

Every day across the nation, our first responders put their lives on the line, sacrificing to keep us safe in our communities.

And, these three men were doing just that: serving and protecting their communities.

I honor them for their service to Jacksonville, and I keep them and their families in my prayers as they recover from this tragic accident.

HONORING MARCUS SCHMIDT

### HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 29, 2012*

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Marcus Schmidt of the Centralia High School Wrestling team for winning the Class 1 Missouri State Wrestling Championship in the 120-pound weight class.

Mr. Schmidt and his coaches should be commended for all their hard work throughout the regular season and for bringing home the state title in the Class 1 120-pound weight class to his school and community. This is his fourth state medal and second consecutive Class 1 championship.

I ask that you join me in recognizing Mr. Schmidt for a job well done!

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF BRANSON, MISSOURI

### HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 29, 2012*

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize world-famous Branson, Missouri. This year, Branson celebrates 100 years of heritage, harmony, and hospitality. Branson is a community of people, shaped and inspired by the lakes and hills that surround her, with a common mission, united in perseverance and service to others.

Over the past 100 years, millions of people from around the world have enjoyed and appreciated this special location in Ozark Mountain Country. However, it wasn't always this way, as Branson comes from humble beginnings.

In 1882, a community was founded when a young schoolteacher named Reuben Branson built a store and opened the first post office in a rural area of southwest Missouri. Branson continued to grow, helped by steamboats and the White River Railroad arriving in 1906, and Branson was officially incorporated on April 1, 1912.

In 1907, preacher Harold Bell Wright wrote a best-selling book, "Shepherd of the Hills," which led to an attraction still thriving today. Inspired entrepreneurs kept arriving and in 1949, Hugo Herschend signed a 99-year lease on a cave and went on to build Silver Dollar City. In 1959, Branson's distinction as a music destination began when the Mabe brothers opened the first music show. The Presley family opened the town's second music show on what eventually became Missouri Route 76.